

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Final Office Action dated December 18, 2009. Applicant has amended claims 4, 9, 11, 12 and 14 – 16, and canceled claims 10 and 13. Upon entry of this Amendment, claims 1 – 9, 11, 12 and 14 – 17 will be pending in the present application.

Allowable Subject Matter

In the Final Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 1 – 8, 11 and 12 are allowable in their present form, and that claims 10 and 14 – 17 include allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. In this Amendment, Applicant has amended claim 9 to include the elements of objected to claim 10, which is canceled, and has amended claims 14 and 15 to include all of the subject matter recited by their base claim, claim 13, which is also canceled. Claim 16 is amended to depend from allowable independent claim 15. Claim 17 also depends from claim 15. Applicant has also amended claims 4, 11 and 12 for reasons unrelated to the patentability of the claim over the prior art. Consequently, all of pending claims 1 – 9, 11, 12 and 14 – 17 are in condition for allowance.

Claim Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 9 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Fraley et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,622,046). Applicant does not acquiesce in, and respectfully traverses, the rejection. Nevertheless, in the interest of expediting the allowance of this application, Applicant has amended the claims such that all pending claims are allowable, as described above. Applicant reserves the right to represent the claims as previously presented in one or more continuing applications.

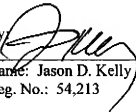
CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and prompt allowance of all pending claims. Please charge any additional fees or credit any overpayment to deposit account number 50-1778. The Examiner is invited to telephone the below-signed attorney to discuss this application.

Date: February 18, 2010

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